



*As Board members we are invited to contribute to the life and traditions of the School as our starting point the school's designation – its name, its motto, its crest. Growing familiarity with these signs and symbols will assist us in owning*

*We also clarify our thinking around the school designations as a school within its respective Diocese.*

## Resource Preview

### CONTENT

What are the elements of our school's badge and what do they seek to communicate to us? We would consider the elements of the badge: the Marist M, the symbols included [eg. waratah, the lamp, southern cross etc] also the motto and its meaning.

What art works can be found around the school and what do they seek to communicate to us? Consider: the crucifix, images of the BVM and of the school's patron; likewise images of the Founder of the Brothers and of Marist Education - Marcellin Champagnat.

Catholic Education is our commitment to 'making Jesus Christ known and loved'. Our Marist tradition challenges us to do this in our Marist way. By that we mean using what we consider to be some of the identifiable characteristics of spirituality and Marist educational practice.

### Quotations

#### IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT [Marist Education document]

31. Wherever he found people dedicated to the Christian formation of youth, Marcellin affirmed and encouraged them. Since the early days at La Valla and the Hermitage, many different people, men and women, Brothers and Lay people, have been attracted by his personality and charism. In living out their own vocation, they have come to identify themselves with his charismatic style of continuing the mission of Jesus.
47. We all share a common concern for the success of our work and feel ourselves co-responsible with those in leadership positions for planning, animating and evaluating our ministry. Our school leaders foster this sharing of responsibilities through distributing the work to be done, and through setting up structures to both co-ordinate our efforts and ensure wide participation in the taking of decisions.

## WATER FROM THE ROCK [Marist Spirituality document]



15. We are inspired by the vision and lives of Marcellin and his first disciples as we journey to God. While we share such a pilgrimage with many, we are conscious of our own distinctive style. We are gifted to share in that transforming experience of being, with Mary, loved unconditionally by Jesus. From this flow the particular characteristics of our manner of being followers of Champagnat.
- #30. Marcellin and the first Brothers were united in heart and mind. Their relationships were marked by warmth and tenderness. In their discussions about living together as Brothers they found it useful to compare the spirit of their community life to that of a family. Like our early communities, we are inspired by the home of Nazareth to develop those attitudes that make family spirit a reality: love and forgiveness, support and help, forgetfulness of self, openness to others and joy. This style of relating has become a characteristic of our way of being Marist.

## REFLECTIONS

Share

- reflections or reactions to these readings;
- your experience of these qualities in this school from your perspective;
- any questions about the College's identity that stay with you at this time?

## PRAYER

We thank you our Creator that in revealing yourself to us, you use the power of image and symbol to help us understand who we are as a Marist community in this place and to respond to you. We can speak of you as Father, as Mother, as Burning Bush, as Gentle Breeze, as Lamb of God and Light and Word and Way.

Help us now to gain from the power of our symbols here to reach a deeper understanding of this 'sacred place', this 'holy ground' on which our young people, their educators and families gather each day; and where generations of young people have gathered before them for education, for prayer, for celebration and, too often, for sadness.

Mary we speak of you in symbol as we consider your faithfulness and care for us - Morning Star. Good Mother, Ordinary Resource; be with us now as we work to appreciate more and more the spirituality and story that you have given us, through Marcellin, our father and founder.

Amen



*The young priest, Marcellin Champagnat, saw a need in a time of great challenge, and followed through in establishing small schools in villages and towns. He saw education as the force that could help France re-establish 'good Christians and good citizens'.*

*From a young age as a country boy he showed enterprise, foresight, common sense and pragmatism. As a young seminarian when home on breaks from study he demonstrated that he was a born teacher attracting children and adults to attend his catechism lessons.*

## CONTENT

His context was the French Revolution and its devastating aftermath. His milieu was a large family in which he learned the wisdom and spirituality of loving parents; and subsequently his colleagues in the seminary who dreamed of a new Church.

The young Jean-Baptiste Montagne's death was the turning point in his decision to begin village schools. "We must have Brothers to teach the poor country children!"

### Quotations

#### IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT [Marist Education document]

53. Marcellin Champagnat lived among children and young people, loved them with passion, and devoted all his energies for them. As his disciples, we also experience a special joy in sharing our time and our persons with them, we resonate with their aspirations, we are filled with compassion for them and we reach out to them all in their difficulties.
69. The core of Marcellin Champagnat's vision of mission was "to make Jesus Christ known and loved". His saw education as the way to lead young people to the experience of personal faith and of their vocation as "good Christians and virtuous citizens".

#### WATER FROM THE ROCK [Marist Spirituality document]

6. The group's way of living the Gospel was a reflection of the character, values, and spirituality of its leader, Marcellin Champagnat. His spirituality was deeply influenced by his own personality. His first disciples remembered with affection the Marcellin they knew: open, frank, resolute, courageous, enthusiastic, constant and equable. His whole life gave witness of a person with a practical disposition, a man of action, and of humility. This enabled him to draw together from various sources a simple and down-to-earth spirituality.

15. We are inspired by the vision and lives of Marcellin and his first disciples as we journey to God. While we share such a pilgrimage with many, we are conscious of our own distinctive style. We are gifted to share in that transforming experience of being, with Mary, loved unconditionally by Jesus. From this flow the particular characteristics of our manner of being followers of Champagnat.



## REFLECTIONS

Share:

- What you have learned about Marcellin from these Marist documents?
- What questions stay with you about Marcellin and his early work?
- What qualities do you see manifest in our Board deliberations from these Marist documents?

## PRAYER

Creator God, you inspired Marcellin Champagnat to trust you in all things. From his earliest days he came to know you through the goodness of his family. Throughout his life and formation he came to know you more and more deeply at 'crib and cross and altar'.

Strengthen us who follow in his footsteps to also come to know Jesus Christ better and to make Him known and loved to those we serve and to one another.

Continue to inspire us to be faithful to his vision for the education of the young and to your evolving mystery within our lives.

Marcellin was gifted with a dream of living in the midst of people; and it was through the normal events of his life he discovered the presence of a loving and faithful God. Gift each of us to continue to share this dream with all with whom we come in contact.

Amen.



*The history of the Church abounds with spiritual and educational traditions: Franciscan, Josephite, Dominican, Benedictine, Ignatian, to name just a few. These traditions which continue to this day are the fruits of the 'holy ones', who, inspired by the Holy Spirit, founded the tradition.*

*Our Marist spirituality and educational way had its genesis in a time of great turmoil, and continues today in a time almost as challenging. We do not seek to merely copy traditions of the past, but rather to shape our tradition to today's needs.*

## CONTENT

Reflecting on our extensive experience in education, Marist educators have identified a number of characteristics we would call Marist.

While many other traditions would share some of these characteristics, we believe it is the 'mix' of these characteristics that best describes our Marist style of education: presence, simplicity, family spirit, love of work and in the way of Mary.

### Quotations

#### IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT – a vision for Marist education today

97. Our style of educating is based on a vision that is truly holistic, and that consciously seeks to communicate values. While we share such a vision with many, especially in Church circles, we use a distinctive pedagogical approach which Marcellin and the first Marists initiated and which was innovative in many of its aspects.
98. We share their intuition that "to bring up children properly, we must love them, and love them all equally". From this principle flow the particular characteristics of our style of educating: presence, simplicity, family spirit, love of work, and following the way of Mary. We seek to adopt these attitudes and values as our way of inculturating the Gospel. It is their sum and their interaction which gives our Marist style its Spirit-inspired originality.

#### GATHERED AROUND THE SAME TABLE – the vocation of Champagnat's laity

54. The strength of this family spirit gathers us who live the Marist charism into a new family of followers of Christ, through the example of Mary. The table of La Valla is a symbol of the relationship that unites us.



55. The communion between Lay people and Brothers complements and enriches our specific vocations and different states of life. There is not only a place for both at the table, but we need each other at our side.
56. This sharing requires times together. Around the table people gather to speak, to laugh, to be together. It is necessary to seek out those moments and spaces for communication in depth, meetings of a quality that unite us in what is essential. Thus it will be easier to understand the different ways of thinking and living, and accepting our own and other people's limitations in a climate of true brotherhood.

## REFLECTION

Share:

- Some reflections on your understanding of these extracts from our Marist documents.
- How do you see these qualities – presence, family spirit, simplicity, love of work and in Mary's way' – apparent in the day to day operation of the school?
- Any perceptions as to how such qualities might be enhanced.

## PRAYER

We believe that we are a people gathered together with a common purpose.

We believe that God is present in our work, and that with Mary and St Marcellin, God continues to speak to us through our Marist charism.

We know that we are immersed in mystery; that our lives are more than they seem; that we need each other and belong to each other.

We recognise that the qualities of our 'Marist Way' enable God to touch us, to draw us more deeply into the mystery of Jesus whose name we strive to make known to all who are part of our mission; and whose love we know will deeply enrich us, our families, our students and our world.

So, aware of the spirituality we share, we hope at this time to enter more deeply into the sacredness of our lives and the richness of our calling.

Amen.



*Central to our Marist story and spirituality is the person of Mary, the Mother of Jesus. She was a significant presence in Marcellin's story and has continued over the time of the Institute to be our guide and mentor – as Marcellin called her: 'our Good Mother'.*

*It is her spirit that has guided us and encouraged Marists across the world to strive to 'make Jesus Christ known and loved' in her way.*

## CONTENT

The story of the young woman Mary, Miriam of Nazareth, from anxious teen at the time of her invitation at the Annunciation, to mature woman and disciple at the foot of the Cross, provides us with our guide as to what 'in Mary's way' means for us as Marists.

Uncertain as a pregnant teen, to concerned older woman as Jesus began his public ministry, to aware and concerned guest at the wedding in Cana of Galilee, to heart-broken and faithful woman at the cross, she teaches us that life is about living with uncertainty and trust.

Her story reminds us that pondering in our hearts is a vital part of our call as Marists. It is there that we meet God and hear the Word that will inspire our ministry.

### Quotations

#### WATER FROM THE ROCK [Marist spirituality flowing in the tradition of Marcellin Champagnat]

7. Key among the formative influences that shaped his spirituality was Marcellin's personal experience of being loved intensely by Jesus and called by Mary. An incident early in 1823 ("Memorare in the Snow") was understood by Marcellin and his Brothers as highly significant. Marcellin and Stanislaus were lost in a snow storm. With his companion unconscious at his feet, Marcellin believed that if Mary does not come to our aid, we are lost. Placing his life in God's hands, he prayed the Memorare...
8. Marcellin was also deeply aware of the love of Jesus and Mary for others. This inspired in him the passion of an apostle. He dedicated his life to sharing this love. In Marcellin's encounter with the dying young man, Jean-Baptiste Montagne, we see how disturbed Marcellin was to meet a boy facing the end of his life without knowing the love God had for him.
25. The relationship of Marcellin to Mary was deeply marked by an affective and total trust in her, as the "Good Mother," because it was her work that he undertook. He wrote once: Without Mary we are nothing and with Mary we have everything, because Mary always has her adorable Son within her arms or in her heart. This belief remained constant all through his life. Jesus and Mary were

the treasure on which Marcellin had learned to place his own heart. This intimate relationship helped shape the Marial dimension of our spirituality. In our tradition, the phrase “Ordinary Resource” has come to encapsulate our constant reliance on Mary. The motto attributed to Champagnat by his biographer, All to Jesus through Mary, all to Mary for Jesus, captures this close relationship between the Son and the Mother and our Founder’s attitude of confidence in Mary, which we are invited to live.



## REFLECTION

Share

- How these insights have helped you understand Mary’s role in our Marist story.
- What questions remain for you about the person and role of Mary in our Marist story and in the broader story of the Church.

## PRAYER

We thank you gracious God and Jesus, our Brother, that in calling us to come to you as your sons and daughters, you invite us to discipleship. You have given us Mary as our Good Mother, our Ordinary Resource the woman who would inspire our response to you and shape our Marist hearts.

We thank you, Good Mother that you have chosen us to bear your name and have made us your own so that we might be, like you, wholly committed to the Lord in faith, love and trust. Share with us your spirit and inspire us with your ways of being and acting, that we might come to see as you see, to feel as you feel, to judge as you judge, to love as you love with your discretion, your sensitivity and respect for each person.

Amen



# Resource Preview

To access reflections 5-13  
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